

living in my home State. Thanks to the ACA, they are now covered. That measure was called the Affordable Care Act for a reason: It is estimated to have saved every family in America about \$4,000 in health insurance premiums.

I don't think any of us could have predicted 11 years ago just how important the protections it guaranteed to Americans would become. Then came the coronavirus. In the year since the pandemic was declared, the virus has claimed more than half a million American lives. That is more than the number of American lives lost in World War I, World War II, and the Vietnam war combined.

We grieve with every family who has suffered a loss, and we know there are millions more Americans who have been affected by the virus. Thirty million of our family members, friends, colleagues, and neighbors have been diagnosed with COVID-19. That is 30 million Americans who are now living with a preexisting condition. We have heard stories about the so-called long-haulers, individuals who report they are still having health problems months after their original diagnosis. They are struggling with shortness of breath, trouble sleeping, severe fatigue, and other symptoms that NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins has deemed a "significant public health concern."

These Americans have enough to worry about as it is with their recovery; could you imagine if they also had to worry about being able to qualify for health coverage? In a world without the ACA, they would have. Before the ACA was the law of the land, people could be denied health coverage or charged significantly higher premiums for having diabetes or asthma—even acne.

Could you imagine if this pandemic hit before we passed that law? The tens of millions of Americans who would have to wonder how they were going to pay for their care, their children's care, in the middle of a pandemic?

Thanks to the ACA, they are covered. It has been a lifeline for millions of Americans, like Michelle Crifasi, one of my neighbors in Springfield, IL. Recently, Michelle wrote to me about what the ACA has meant for her and her family. For much of her life, Michelle was burdened with an unknown illness, until she was finally diagnosed with common variable immune deficiency in her mid-thirties. It is a rare condition that limits the immune system's ability to fight infection. The diagnosis was bittersweet. While she could finally begin to understand and treat her condition, she later learned that she had passed it down to her daughter. Her husband also developed it after undergoing cancer treatment.

The good news is that Michelle and her family have health insurance through her employer, and because of the Affordable Care Act, this employer-

based health plan can no longer deny Michelle health coverage or charge her higher premiums because she has a preexisting condition. Her insurer can no longer impose annual or lifetime caps on her care. It can't cut her off right when she needs healthcare the most. Michelle's daughter, Meredith, a junior at the University of Illinois-Springfield, is able to stay on her parents' plan until age 26. Because of the ACA, Michelle's health plan must cover her family's prescription drug costs.

Without insurance coverage, treating common variable immune deficiency can cost patients more than \$100,000 a year. Put simply, these protections were not in place before the Affordable Care Act, and Michelle and her family are alive today because of these protections. This family's story is proof that the ACA is one of the greatest legislative accomplishments in modern American history, and it is also proof that there is a lot more we can do to protect people like her and her family.

While Michelle is grateful for the ACA, she recently told me that "I feel there is more work to be done." And she is right, which is why we fought, as part of the American Rescue Plan, to expand health insurance subsidies and eligibility for plans covered under the ACA. These provisions will ensure that no enrollee spends more than 8.5 percent of their income on health insurance premiums. The typical 60-year-old couple in Illinois could see their premiums reduced by \$1,300.

The ARP also increases eligibility for premium subsidies to working-class American families earning more than 400 percent of the Federal poverty level.

Outside of the ARP, the Biden-Harris administration has taken other steps to bolster the ACA, like creating a special open enrollment period and ensuring that the DOJ defends the law in the case before the Supreme Court. All of this is welcome news, and I look forward to working with the Biden-Harris administration to accomplish even more. That is why we not only celebrate the historic passage of the ACA but all of the lives it has saved as well.

After years of unrelenting, unjustified attacks on this critical piece of legislation, we are finally in a position to build on it. I am ready to work with the Biden-Harris administration to create a public option, lower prescription drug prices, and address racial and ethnic disparities in our healthcare system.

After 11 years since its passage, I am proud to declare: The ACA is here to stay.

And here in Congress, we will continue working to perfect it.

NOTICE OF A TIE VOTE, UNDER S. RES. 27

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print the following letter in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

The Secretary of the Senate:

PN79-6, the nomination of Colin Hackett Kahl, of California, to be Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, having been referred to the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee, with a quorum present, has voted on the nomination as follows—

On the question of reporting the nomination favorably with the recommendation that the nomination be confirmed, 13 ayes to 13 noes; and

In accordance with section 3, paragraph (1)(A) of S. Res. 27 of the 117th Congress, I hereby give notice that the Committee has not reported the nomination because of a tie vote, and ask that this notice be printed in the RECORD pursuant to the resolution.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. ROBERT MENENDEZ,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 21-31 concerning the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Republic of Korea for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$36 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

HEIDI H. GRANT,
Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 21-31

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

- (i) Prospective Purchaser: Republic of Korea
- (ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment * \$33 million.
Other \$3 million.
Total \$36 million.
- (iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase: